

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending. Claims 1-17 stand rejected. Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, and 14 have been amended. Claim 12 is canceled. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following comments the Applicants respectfully request allowance of the application.

THE CLAIMS ARE DEFINITE

Claims 1-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 13, and 14 have been amended and the Applicant requests that the rejection be reconsidered.

In particular, claim 1 has been amended to further explain signal propagation time delay circuits, the input unit and the detector. Looking to claim 1, in one embodiment, a detector (e.g. element 805 in figure 8) is provided to determine a time required for the input signal from the input unit (e.g. element 801 in figure 8) to propagate through the paths and arrive at the out put node. An input unit provides an input signal to the input node (see e.g. figures 8 and 9 RETRIEVAL START SIGNAL, 801 and 911).

In one embodiment, the input node is the same as the at least one input node recited in the claim. The input unit's (801) output is connected to the input node. In the example of figure 8, there is more than one predetermined signal, such as the output of the digital to pulse converters 802 and 803. The direction of propagation of the input signal from unit 801 to unit 805 through the plural paths connecting the nodes may be regulated by determining a time required for the input signal to propagate through the paths and arrive at the output node.

In view of the amendments to the claims, the claims are believed to distinctly claim the invention. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

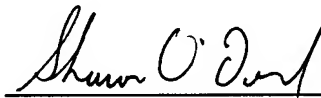
For the above reasons, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Prompt consideration and allowance are solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4255 to discuss any matter concerning this application.

Applicants do not believe that any additional fees are required in connection with this submission. Nonetheless, Applicants authorize payment of any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit of any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

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